Chapel Farm Cottage
Hermitage
Newbury
Berks.

13/7/20.

Dear Mrs Wilkinson,

Thank you for your letter.

I think you mistake or evade the point at issue. I do not in the least object to your expressing your opinion, however unfavourable, on my poetry or on Imagism in general. You have a perfect right to do this. But I do object strenuously to your publishing in a book which purports to be a critical survey of modern poetry a statement which is wholly false and which, accepted in good faith by an uninformed reader, would lead him to believe that "Imagism" is a sickly affectation. The sentences I object to are on p. 122 "They (Imagistes) have been too much interested in their own aesthetic conceptions and in their theories of craftmanship to remember that poetry, after all, is the sharing of life. And their diction has the stamp of Imagism upon it rather more frequently than the stamp of any individual poet's genius. The colour words of this school have become a mannerism. Imagists are too fond of such lovely words as "Chrome", "saffron", "mauve", especially "mauve". (One critic ~~xxxxks~~ mentions "mauve Imagism")

Whoever that critic was he was an ass. Moreover, each one of those sentences is false. Either you have not read our books or you have read them with a prejudiced eye. Why do we insist on the "precise word", on "no clichés" on "exact rendering"? Precisely with the purpose of "sharing life". It is not true that our diction is unindividual; anyone with critical sense can at once distinguish the style of each one of the "imagistes" from the others. If you had taken the trouble to examine our diction with a tenth the care ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ we gave it, you would have discovered that the diction of each one of the Imagistes is extremely personal and his own. Compare Flint with Amy Lowell, or Flint with H.D., or me with H.D. As to the "mauve", you will find it in Flint's Swan and nowhere in H.D. or me. I suggest that you wrote your comments on the Imagistes with a very imperfect knowledge of what they had done. The first anthology was rather an inadequate basis for a critical study of people who had gone on writing continuously.

As you refuse to withdraw the false statements in your book I must consider what steps I must take to bring

the matter before the public and to correct the unfortunate impression created by your book, since you won't do it. When your book came out I had only just been ~~xxx~~ demobilised and I was too tired to care what anybody said; it is only recently that I have had an opportunity of examining your book.
The only course open to me is to write to American periodicals and point out how you have misinterpreted our ~~w~~ork.

Please accept my excuses for addressing you as "Miss".

Yours sincerely,

Richard Aldington

Mrs J.G. Wilkinson.

c-5/4/4